

Global Partnerships

**“Nature is the common, universal language, understood by all.”
—Kathleen Raine**

Freon Smugglers Convicted

Freon, or CFC-12, used as a coolant and as a propellant in aerosol, destroys the planet's protective stratospheric ozone layer, which screens harmful UV radiation from reaching ground level. Strict controls on CFCs were established by the international Montreal Protocol enabling legislation in the U.S. After a two-year investigation, EPA-New England's Criminal Investigation Division recently led an effort with the U.S. Customs Service, IRS, and Environment Canada to put an end to a Freon smuggling operation in New Brunswick, Canada and Bangor, Maine. In 1993 and 1994, 245 tons of CFC-12 were illegally imported through Houlton, Maine, and then sold for use throughout New England. The owner of the business involved had not obtained the consumption allowances required by the Clean Air Act to import the product, nor had he paid the more than \$1.6 million in excise taxes due. The owner received a fifteen-month jail sentence along with fines for his role in the offense, and the broker in the operation was sentenced to eight months incarceration. This was the first CFC smuggling case prosecuted in New England, and the first time EPA-New England and Environment Canada's Atlantic Region conducted a coordinated investigation and successful joint prosecution of a transboundary environmental crime.

Because the environment does not stop at our nation's borders, protecting public health and natural resources requires the cooperation of other countries. Transboundary pollution of air and water from Canada and other regions of the world directly affects the environment and well-being of people who live in New England. Global problems, like ozone depletion and human-induced climate change, affect us all. EPA-New England is making sure that we are active not only here in New England, but as part of a connected world.

For example, the Canada-United States Joint Inland Pollution Contingency Plan, developed by EPA and Environment Canada, uses our country's National Response System as a basis for joint operations in the event that an accident in either country would impact the other. EPA-New England has worked with Vermont, New York, and the province of Quebec to conduct oil spill and chemical release exercises--bringing together the local, state, and federal agencies that would immediately be involved at the scene of a spill or release in the Lake Champlain area.

Yankee Know-How

In addition to addressing specific threats to our region, EPA-New England is working to spread expertise and technology developed here to the rest of the world. The U.S. is seen worldwide as a leader in environmental protection, with New England in particular known as a center of environmental technology businesses. We work closely with EPA's Office of International Activities in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and other partners to identify priority areas for programs to share environmental technologies.

By introducing the use of environmental technologies that benefit both the environment and the economy, EPA-New England has helped to build successful environmental training programs in Hungary, Poland, Russia, Brazil, and Indonesia. EPA-arranged exports of innovative environmental technologies to Brazil, Poland, Portugal, and Lithuania have paid dividends for New England's environmental industry through increased exposure to new markets, opportunities to demonstrate innovative technologies abroad, and expanded access to buyers of environmental technology overseas. We have promoted the principles of pollution prevention throughout the international community, while at the same time strengthening our scientific and technical base at home.

Krakow Air Project, Poland
(see following text)

CANADA

EPA-New England participates on the bi-lateral St. Croix International Waterway Commission which does watershed planning and water quality monitoring studies on both sides of the border. EPA-New England and Environment Canada's Atlantic Region also co-chair the St. Croix River Advisory Board on Pollution Control. The Board addresses cross-boundary water quality threats and advises on environmental issues in the watershed.

RUSSIA

EPA-New England Completed an environmental assistance project to assist the government, industries and citizens of Nizhnii Tagil in improving environmental conditions and human health. Activities included pollution prevention and control strategies, environmental law and policy, air quality monitoring design, and risk assessment.

HUNGARY

In August 1997, EPA New England provided assistance in developing an environmental management plan for the Altal-er watershed, assisted in capacity building in the region and helped to develop a first-of-a-kind watershed association. By providing technical assistance in watershed planning and water quality management, EPA New England helped to increase government, industrial, and citizen action to reduce pollution in the area.

VIETNAM

Support from the U.S. Environmental Training Institute and American Waterworks Association enabled EPA-New England to assist in developing and delivering a two-week training course on environmental management and source water protection planning in the Perfume River basin near Hue City.

SOUTH AFRICA

EPA-New England has recently participated in the design and implementation of a community-based environmental capacity building project in Soweto. Working closely with ONE/CHANE, an urban community-based organization in New England, we have trained local environmental coordinators to administer environmental grants to community organizations in Soweto.

INDONESIA

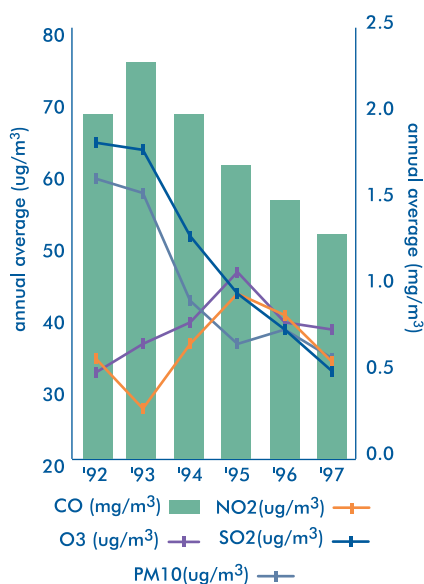
EPA-New England has developed a Sister Region program with BAPEDAL, Indonesia's environmental ministry. This five-year project is funded by the Asian Development Bank and enables BAPEDAL to work with us to design an environmental training and capacity-building program for Indonesia. The program focuses on air quality monitoring, environmental information management and systems, pollution prevention, integrated watershed and coastal zone management, and training in enforcement and compliance.

BRAZIL

EPA-New England has developed a long-term partnership with Companhia de Tecnologia de Saneamento Ambiental, the main environmental agency for the state of Sao Paulo. Building on an existing environmental agreement, we are providing technical expertise, training, and environmental information exchange about pollution prevention, green supply chain management, emergency response, air quality monitoring, risk assessment, and cleaner production.

Spanning the Globe: Our International Project Areas

Figure 14
Krakow, Poland
Air Quality
Central Market Square



source: Krakow Air Monitoring Network

Due to an expanded central heating system for the center city area, both sulfur dioxide and particulate matter concentrations have been significantly reduced since the monitoring network was installed in 1992. However, the areas of the city where soft coal is still the predominate source for residential heating have not experienced a similar decline. The reduction in carbon monoxide is a result of a traffic ban in the central business district.

Global Warming: We're All in this Together

EPA-New England has a region-wide initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help reduce the impacts of global climate change. We are developing greenhouse gas emissions inventories with the region's federal facilities to determine which measures can be implemented to reduce emissions from federal facilities. Additionally, we have funded states to prepare their own greenhouse gas emissions inventories and action plans. Over the past year, EPA-New England distributed educational materials about climate change to all public libraries and most public high school libraries in New England. This information is also available through our web page (<http://www.epa.gov/region01/steward/cchange/index.html>).



One of the programs EPA-New England is promoting to reduce greenhouse gases is ENERGYSTAR, a program that provides information about how to reduce energy needs, and thus greenhouse gas emissions, from buildings and equipment. In 1998, ENERGYSTAR participants in New England achieved a reduction of 995.3 million pounds of carbon dioxide annually and 6.7 million kilowatt hours of energy use—a cost savings of more than \$31 million a year from all of the 225 companies that are now part of the Green Lights/ENERGYSTAR Buildings partnership. This greenhouse gas reduction is the equivalent of taking 99,000 cars off the road—or planting 136,000 acres of trees. The State of New Hampshire and the cities of Boston and Cambridge, MA are among the new participants that have joined the ENERGYSTAR Buildings program along with a dozen other companies, hospitals, schools, and government agencies.

Krakow Air Quality Monitoring Project

The city of Krakow, Poland has some of the worst air pollution in Central and Eastern Europe. The burning of inefficient high-sulfur brown coal for home heating; pollution from cars, trucks, and buses; and industrial emissions from steel mill operations are all responsible for the problem (**Figure 14**). In 1991, EPA developed a bilateral environmental assistance program with the Polish government, with authority and funding under the Support for Eastern European Democracy (SEED) Act. Equipment for continuous air monitoring, manufactured in New England, was installed in the city. EPA-New England provided assistance to local authorities in ways to address air pollution. As a result of the project, the Polish government is now considering alternative transportation control policies and strategies, including a program to phase out lead in gasoline over the next several years and strategies to reduce the use of soft coal for home heating. Increased capacity at the local level to assess mobile source pollution will enable city officials to improve monitoring of threats to public health and develop an effective emission inventory system.